
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

INSPECTORS

OF THE

STATE ALMSHOUSE,

AT BRIDGEWATER.

OCTOBER, 1859.

BOSTON:

WILLIAM WHITE, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1859.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

INSPECTORS' REPORT.

*To His Excellency the Governor and the Honorable Council of
the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*

Our duty, as Inspectors of the State almshouse at Bridgewater, requires us, at the close of each financial year, to make out and present an annual report of the condition, finances and operations of the almshouse aforesaid.

Below is our report for the current year, ending September 30, 1859:

Since the financial embarrassments of 1857-8, the number of inmates in the almshouse at Bridgewater has been much reduced from its then unprecedented and inconvenient number; and, as a natural consequence, the number of sick in the hospitals is much less than when the house was crowded to its utmost capacity.

This single fact shows the importance of limiting the number beyond which no admissions should be allowed, if the comfort, the health and the lives are paramount objects of the establishment.

Although, as before stated, the number is reduced, it is comparatively small, only. The number is daily increasing, and will continue to increase, as heretofore, unless measures are adopted to check the daily round of impositions practiced by

applicants for admission. Would the authorities of our cities and towns, who send the applicants to the State almshouses, be induced to enforce a more rigid and thorough examination into the condition, character and means of those who importune them for aid, and whom they send to these almshouses, they would find many with ample means to support themselves; many who are depositors in our savings banks, and many who are wholly unworthy objects of charity.

This omission to examine applicants thoroughly, tends very much to fill the almshouses with undeserving objects, unnecessarily increases the expenses of the Commonwealth, and increases the evil sought to be alleviated; for it is a notorious fact, that charity, indiscriminately bestowed, begets laziness, pauperism and crime. Of the legions who apply for aid in this country, not one-half, it is ascertained, are the result of necessity.

Were the inmates, when discharged from any one of the almshouses, at their own request, precluded from admission to either of the other houses for a limited time, there would be fewer applicants for charity, and less imposition practiced by those who do apply.

But few repairs or alterations have been made upon the interior or exterior of the buildings during the year, and those few only from urgent necessity. Some few alterations have been made in the arrangement of the rooms, and in the classification of the inmates. Other repairs and alterations are very much needed, both for the comfort of those unfortunate beings whose only home in this world is within the walls of an almshouse, and for the security of the lives and property here living and being. Greater security against fire at the almshouse in Bridgewater is very much needed, and claims the consideration of those who have the power to furnish the necessary protection. The recent appalling and disastrous conflagrations at the Reform School for Boys, and at Deer Island, have filled the public mind with consternation, and awakened a sense of the danger that hangs impending over other similar institutions. Against such a calamity, and we shudder at the thought, the almshouse at Bridgewater is but poorly protected, and we cannot but hope that the recent destruction of public property to a large amount, and the danger to which hundreds of lives were exposed, may

induce those in power to provide a more perfect and thorough protection against fire in our tinder-box almshouses.

It was stated in our Report of last year, that the cooking for the hospitals was done in the private kitchen of the superintendent. The same is the case now, but it is attended with great inconvenience, both to those who have the care of the hospitals, and the superintendent's family; the kitchen being small, and the amount of cooking necessarily very large, the food and the cooking for the sick varying materially from what is required for those in health, increases the difficulty of performing both operations in the same small kitchen. We respectfully recommend that a small kitchen or cook-room for the hospitals be provided.

Most of the rooms in the buildings are warmed by furnaces, some of which are entirely worn out and useless, and must be replaced by new ones, and all of which are out of repair. Could the rooms be warmed by steam, the danger from fire would be greatly lessened, the heat would be less dry, more uniform and healthy.

A larger proportion of the inmates than usual are aged and infirm, one reason for which is, that those who are able to earn something for themselves during the warm season of the year, have, the most of them, left for a season, to return again probably when their earnings are expended, and they can find a more comfortable home at the State almshouse, by which course it will be seen that in the colder and more inclement seasons, when but little can be done profitably upon the farm, and still less within doors, by able bodied men, that class of paupers, able but too indolent to exercise the powers which God has given them, with any profit to themselves or others, are very unprofitable servants, a dead weight, a heavy expense to the Commonwealth, occasioned mainly by a mistaken sympathy in those who send them to the almshouse.

The number of children in this institution has been reduced during the year by the removal of a number of them to the almshouse at Monson. Still, the number of children here is at present very far from being small; they are "neither few nor far between."

Schools are kept as usual, in which the necessary branches of a common school are taught with good success. During

some eight months of the year all the children in health, and old enough to quit the nursery, are placed in the schools. During the summer the boys who are old enough and able, are required to do some of the light and easy work on the farm. It is the business of the teachers, under the directions of the superintendent, to take charge of and care for the scholars, as well out of as in the school-room, and we are gratified in being able to state that under the instructions of the present teachers the children are generally respectful in their deportment, and have made satisfactory proficiency in their studies.

Religious services, as heretofore, are continued in the chapel on each Sabbath, by the chaplain who occupied the same position last year, the Rev. Samuel Richardson, who has labored faithfully in the discharge of his somewhat discouraging duties. With what success, his report hereto annexed will give the requisite information.

The general health of the inmates compares very favorably with their health in former years ; the number of deaths in the hospitals has been comparatively small ; with very few exceptions no epidemic has made its appearance within the walls of the institution ; very few have been afflicted with diseased eyes, that scourge in crowded hospitals, and nine-tenths of those now sick in the hospitals, or who have been sick there during the year, were sadly diseased when admitted, and a large portion of them in the last stages of disease. Every necessary provision is made for their comfort by the superintendent. The resident physician, whose business it is to examine and prescribe for the sick in the hospitals, watch the operations of his prescriptions, and generally to see that all in the hospitals are duly and properly cared for, is seldom absent from his post, is unremitting in his attention to the sick, and in his rounds of duty manifests a sympathy, a feeling for his patients, always necessary in a sick chamber, but not always found in the medical department. The number in health, when admitted, who afterwards become sick, is comparatively very small. The diseases of the sick applicants, when admitted, are of every form and degree, some of them of the most disgusting and offensive character ; to name and classify all of them would require a medical vocabulary rarely found in any language. Much is due to the matrons and male nurses for their care and attention to the sick, the

infirm, the idiotic and insane. And in this connection it gives us great pleasure to speak of the chief matron, the worthy and intelligent lady of the superintendent, than whom few, very few, are more faithful or deserving. For a more particular description of the hospitals and their inmates, reference may be had to the resident physician's report, herewith connected.

There are now in the almshouse about one hundred and fifty demented, partially insane and idiotic persons, some of whom, in the opinion of the undersigned, are proper subjects for the insane hospitals, who ought not on any occasion to be associated with other inmates. If it is the intention of the legislature, or of those whom the legislature has authorized to act in the premises, that these objects of state charity are to be inmates of the almshouses, the Inspectors of this almshouse most respectfully recommend and urge that proper measures may be adopted for, and a small building erected in the yard, in which the demented and partially insane may be made comfortable and kept entirely separate from all the other inmates. They would be less subject to excitement, more quiet and composed, and much easier governed and controlled. The rooms they occupy are needed for other purposes; both the sane and the insane would be easier and better cared for, and with no more expense.

Under the direction of the superintendent, decided and important improvements have been made upon the farm connected with the establishment, and upon the grounds around the buildings. Lands, before barren and unproductive, are now under a good state of culture, and with the blessing of Him who giveth the increase, will yield a plentiful harvest. Much of the land which had been neglected and was worn out when purchased, is now in a high state of cultivation. A young and thrifty orchard of some acres promises much in the future. The crop of hay is abundant and of excellent quality; the corn, potatoes, and other vegetables, although not as early as usual, are thrifty and promise an abundance in due season.

The number of inmates at the present time is about five hundred; the average number for the year is about six hundred.

Of this number, two hundred are children under the age of fifteen. Among all the male inmates, there is not a man whose mental and physical powers are both in a sound and healthy

state. This remark, to the same extent, will not apply to the females. A small number of the females are in tolerable health and able to work, but very feeble minded. There are some of both sexes, idiotic and partially deranged, whose health is not bad. Such of the men, with the boys of a larger class, can and do work upon the farm ; but with very little of that energy and thriftiness which is characteristic of a New England laborer.

The fare of the inmates consists of plain, substantial, wholesome food, well cooked and enough of it. Their clothing is also plain, not always of the latest importation or newest fashion, but decent, neat and comfortable ; their rooms and their beds are well aired and ventilated.

No labor or pains are spared by the superintendent to have the inmates and every thing around them clean and comfortable, to preserve order and discipline throughout ; and few men better understand how to do that effectually, calmly, quietly, when he can, forcibly when he must.

The chief assistant, William C. Howland, a deserving young man, who has been in the establishment from its commencement, and has discharged his arduous and sometimes unpleasant duties to the satisfaction of the superintendent and Inspectors, has claims to our special notice.

In addition to his many other good traits of character, he has the somewhat rare quality of interesting himself in his own appropriate department only ; a very important qualification in any branch of business, but especially in an institution like this ; but as experience has shown, as rare as it is indispensable.

To establish rules and regulations for the government and discipline of an institution such as this, adapted to the conflicting dispositions and ardent temperaments, the intellectual, moral and physical diseases of the inmates, requires a knowledge of human nature, with patience and experience of no ordinary character. In their attempts to accomplish this work from time to time, so as best to subserve the interests of all concerned, the Inspectors have found in the superintendent an experienced and efficient adviser, in whose experience, judgment and discretion, they could rely with much confidence.

With the children, who by the misfortune or crimes of their parents, have become inmates here, there are hopes and a fair prospect that very many of them, by a proper training, a disci-

pline kind, yet inflexible, and a patience untiring, may become useful and respectable members of society. But with a large proportion of the adult inmates, the aspect is totally and sadly different. Diseased in body and mind, many of them of the most loathsome and revolting kinds, the result of former neglect, exposure, abuse, ignorance and crime, there is very little prospect that any permanent improvement in their character or conduct will be effected. To these general remarks, as to every general rule, there are exceptions. But facts warrant the statement, that those who have no respect for themselves, or who never had any for others, whose diseases, mental and physical, are the result of crime, who on being discharged return again to their "wallowing in the mire," very seldom become useful or decent members of society, but in a few short weeks are sent here again more filthy, more degraded, with little spirit, and no manhood; it may be to go the same round over again, and pass away unhonored and unsung.

The object of these remarks is, that some regulations may be adopted, if possible, to prevent a great evil to which we have before alluded. Many of the inmates discharged—always at their own or friends' request—after disposing of their clothing to procure intoxicating liquors, apply for and obtain admission to some other almshouse; and this is of frequent practice. Many others are removed by those in authority, but to return again in a very dilapidated condition, requiring more care with less prospect of reform. In both cases the inmates leave with a decent suit of clothes, clean and sober, soon to be returned ragged, filthy, and in many instances badly intoxicated; thus incurring in the aggregate, a heavy expense to the State, and much unnecessary and very unpleasant labor for those who have the cleansing operations to perform, preparatory to admission. Nor are these the only difficulties to be encountered or submitted to in this erratic course of admission and discharge. The imbecility, the degradation, the sufferings occasioned by it, are subjects that claim consideration and action.

The detailed report of the superintendent, hereunto annexed, and which constitutes a part of this Report, precludes the necessity of more from the Inspectors than a statement of facts of a general character.

To the subordinate officers generally, and teachers, as well as the assistants, much credit is due for their generally cheerful co-operation with the superintendent in whatever has seemed right to promote the best interests of the institution.

JAMES FORD,

J. H. MITCHELL,

IRA H. CHASE, JR.,

Inspectors.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

To the Inspectors of the State Pauper Establishment at Bridgewater.

GENTLEMEN,—I herewith present the Sixth Annual Statement of the affairs of the above institution, for the year ending September 30, 1859.

SUMMARY OF INMATES.

Number in the house October 1, 1858,	525
Admitted since, (including 52 births, and <i>exclusive</i> of more than three hundred who have been provided with supper, lodging and breakfast,)	1,243
Whole number provided for in the house during the year,	1,768
Number discharged, returned, &c., &c.,	1,094
“ died,	178
“ remaining October 1, 1859,	494
Men, 109; women, 171; boys, 117; girls, 97.	
Average number through the year,	604

EXPENDITURES.

Amount expended from October 1, 1858, to December 31, inclusive,	\$8,873 36
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RECEIPTS FOR SAME PERIOD.

Cash for beef cattle sold,	\$476 05
Cash from treasurer of Commonwealth,	8,397 31
Total,	\$8,873 36

The above, (\$8,397.31,) deducted from the sum remaining September 30, 1858, of the appropriation for the legislative year 1858, and there remains a balance of \$1,380.61, as per account with the Superintendent.

From the above balance should be deducted the salary and expenses of the inspectors (\$155.80) for the quarter ending December 31, 1858, whose bills have not been paid by the Superintendent till the present year, and the actual balance unexpended and uncalled for, is \$1,224.81.

Amount expended from January 1 to September

30, 1859, inclusive, is \$26,544 82

Amount received for same period:

Cash for beef cattle, pigs, flour, barrels, and	
sundry small articles,	\$1,561 49
Cash from treasurer of Commonwealth, . .	24,983 33
Whole amount expended for the year ending	
September 30, 1859,	35,573 98

Appropriated as follows:

For salary and expense of inspectors, . .	\$602 67
salary of officers,	6,385 50
incidental labor,	273 41
flour,	6,544 75
corn and meal,	1,010 75
beans,	59 88
potatoes,	196 43
salt beef,	584 00
salt pork,	589 89
fish,	238 45
fresh meat,	2,454 93
sugar,	229 36
molasses,	412 35
soap,	348 00
milk,	1,750 13
butter,	365 07
cheese,	70 73
eggs,	42 70
tea, coffee, and chocolate,	1,057 85

For small groceries,	\$304 46
rice,	227 17
salt,	40 46
fruit and vegetables,	47 84
tobacco, snuff and pipes,	219 27
crackers,	167 25
dry goods, bedding and clothing,	2,465 93
coal,	2,106 13
lights,	143 56
boots, shoes and leather,	838 37
hats and caps,	70 89
brooms, brushes and baskets,	89 20
crockery, tin, glass and hard ware,	75 71
post office expenses,	28 04
books, stationery and newspapers,	74 76
medicines for hospital,	392 21
consultation fees,	52 00
paint,	2 50
lime, lumber, cement and bricks,	283 84
blacksmithing,	119 25
iron safe,	110 00
door findings,	19 60
farm implements and seeds,	77 04
hay and straw,	654 07
beef and farm stock,	1,480 33
incidental expenses,	68 71
committing lunatics,	17 10
carpenter, mason and plumbing work,	170 92
furnaces, stoves, boiler, &c.,	989 05
transportation of merchandise,	490 71
transportation of paupers,	152 12
furniture,	223 12
hops and malt,	61 02
trees,	51 00
carriage expense,	50 00
water tanks,	84 50
Total,	<hr/> \$35,573 98

Balance remaining of the appropriation for the year 1859,
\$11,016.67.

If the whole amount of money expended during the year be averaged upon the number of inmates supported, the cost per week has been \$112 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents; if only the amount actually used for the legitimate current expenses of the institution, it has been one dollar per week, exclusive of the products of the farm and interest on the cost of the establishment.

As I observed last year, there is little or no need of any remarks from me, there having been no material change in the general management of the institution, and you being conversant with all its details, whatever is written for your consideration can be little else than a repetition of what has been said in former years.

The departments in the house, medical and school, have been conducted in a manner that reflects credit upon those who are charged with the immediate administrative duties pertaining thereto. Religious and moral instruction, as heretofore, have been provided for all, under the ministration of Rev. S. Richardson, who is earnest and faithful in his endeavors to promote the spiritual welfare of those committed to his charge.

For details in the foregoing departments, the reports of the attending physician, H. C. Shaw, and the chaplain, furnish all that is thought necessary.

The repairs of the establishment the present year, of necessity, have been quite extensive, thereby involving a considerable outlay of money.

The furnaces, some of them entirely worn out, others nearly so, have been repaired, where it was safe to do so, and new ones set in place of those that had become unfit for further use.

It has been found necessary also to provide a tubular boiler and tank for hot water.

The roof, when the building was completed, was supposed to be slated, but it was so miserably done, that it has never answered beyond an apology for a covering. It is now undergoing thorough repairs, and it is believed will be in a much better condition than when the building was received from the commissioners.

Stationary ladders, buckets and hose have been provided for the better security against fire.

As quite a large number of our inmates are of that unfortunate class, idiotic and demented insane, as I have before sug-

gested, it appears to be absolutely necessary that some more suitable apartments should be provided for their custody. The wards they now occupy are inconvenient for the cure and treatment of a considerable portion, at least, of those who belong to this class; besides, the room is much needed for the better classification of the sick, as well as to secure generally a more economical arrangement throughout the house.

The harvest not being completed, results can only be estimated, and in doing this, comparatively, some portions of the crops the present year, such as potatoes, carrots, parsnips and hay, will be found to exceed that of any former year, while that of beets and turnips, judging from present indications, will be somewhat less. As a whole, the products of the farm will exceed this year, that of any since the institution commenced operation, in 1854.

Although the farm has been very much improved in its real value as well as in its general appearance since it became the property of the Commonwealth, a vast amount of labor must yet be expended upon it before it will be brought under such a state of cultivation as to reduce to any considerable extent the annual expenses necessary for its maintenance.

All is done that can be upon the farm, with the labor of inmates, and perhaps as much is accomplished as can be reasonably expected from the class of persons found here at the season when labor upon a farm is most needed and most profitable; at least, such I think must be the opinion of those best acquainted with the general character and condition of the inmates of this institution. As you are very well aware, gentlemen, a large proportion of the number admitted here are children and old, decrepit, worn out persons, whose object (of the latter class) is to find a comfortable home in which to spend the remnant of their days. From neither of these classes can labor be expected; but on the contrary, much labor and constant care in nursing and otherwise providing for their wants must of necessity be bestowed upon them, if we would make the institution what it was designed to be—a home for this very class.

There is still another and quite a different class of individuals, who to a considerable extent, in the best part of the season for farming, are compelled to seek a retreat within these walls; such as are afflicted with infamous diseases, the greater

part of whom, after a few weeks of medical treatment, kind nursing and good living, are abundantly, and in many instances, well qualified to do any and all kinds of work required in an institution like this. The question is often asked, Do you require these persons to labor when restored to health? Do you require them after leaving the hospital department, by labor of some kind, to remunerate the Commonwealth for expenses incurred in restoring them to health? I answer, it is done only to a very limited extent. It seems always to have been the policy—not the best I think—to discharge all who are well, whenever they apply for it, which is generally in a day or two after they are set to work.

This mode of dealing with the class under consideration would be very much less objectionable, if by it the State also was to be discharged from further expenses; but this is not the case, for in instances to a large extent, they come again and again, afflicted with the same loathsome diseases, only to be again discharged, after they have—to use their own expression—“come round,” to pursue the same course of dissipation and crime.

If those to whom I have alluded, on being cured or relieved of their maladies and discharged, return again to their wallowing and intoxication, and thereby soon become inmates again, could be kept a suitable time after being cured, they would, in addition to contributing something towards defraying the expenses incurred for their benefit, for a time, at least, be kept from the practice of vicious habits; and by being compelled to labor reasonably, might as some have done, be induced to lead a life more akin to usefulness, respectability and virtue. Especially might we hope this of the young and middle-aged of both sexes whose diseases are not incurable, instead of returning in a few weeks from the time of their discharge, as scores of them do, from two to four times a year, seven-fold more filthy and depraved than when they were discharged.

It would seem—and facts and experience warrant the deduction—that a little longer stay after restoration to health, with judicious and appropriate employment, might in some measure divest them of the feeling and spirit too often manifested, that live as wickedly as they may, when they become run down, they have only to request the city or town authorities to return

them to the almshouse, and forthwith they are here again for the same round of medical treatment and discharge.

If the course suggested, of retaining for a longer period than has been the practice heretofore, those who are restored to health in the almshouse, requiring them to labor, many might and probably would be, to some extent, made better, and as a matter of economy, the State would lose nothing. In the winter and more inclement season, when their labor cannot be made available for any beneficial purposes, there is no lack of inmates, healthy, robust, and able to work, who, when the spring comes, with her modest invitation to attend the work-festival, call for and claim their discharge.

In consequence of these difficulties, we are obliged to depend mainly, for inmate labor, upon a class that, to a very considerable extent, are incapacitated, either mentally or physically, or both, to labor much upon a farm with any considerable profit; especially has this been the case, in years past, when the farm was in a rough, stony, and uncultivated condition, in which situation some portion of it yet remains.

That part of the farm which has been cultivated is now in good condition and produces remunerative crops.

The work of clearing rocks, stumps and bushes, building walls, improving the roads and ways about the premises, of ditching and draining meadows, planting fruit and forest trees, has been and still is carried on with all the available means at hand.

Were a more rigid mode adopted in regard to admitting and discharging the class of persons to whom I have more particularly referred, I think the means of improving the farm would be increased very much. Pauperism is, in a measure, contagious, and as a subject of economy and prevention, seems to demand the provision of some effectual means by which it may be measurably controlled and reduced within the limits of unavoidable misfortune and poverty. That there are many, too many, receiving aid in our State almshouses who are not entitled to it, and who would never have applied had it not been that they supposed there was no such thing as remuneration to the State, by labor or otherwise, needs but a cursory glance at the facts to convince the most skeptical.

In closing, gentlemen, allow me to express my gratitude for the very kind and cordial manner in which you have co-operated with me in administering the affairs of this institution.

Respectfully submitted,

L. L. GOODSPEED.

September 30, 1859.

*Names of Officers and their Salaries.*James Ford, James H. Mitchell, Irah Chase, Jr., *Inspectors.*

Salary of each \$100 and expenses.

Levi L. Goodspeed, <i>Superintendent</i> ,	\$1,200 00
W. C. Howland, <i>Assistant</i> ,	450 00
H. C. Shaw, <i>Physician</i> ,	500 00
Samuel Richardson, <i>Chaplain</i> ,	200 00
H. Trafton, <i>Teacher</i> ,	350 00
F. P. Jones, <i>Farmer</i> ,	400 00
George Crocker, <i>Farmer</i> ,	360 00
S. B. Sawyer, <i>Farmer</i> ,	240 00
J. Stevens, <i>Carpenter, Cook, &c.</i> ,	288 00
William Cheetham, <i>Watchman</i> ,	250 00
John Bennett, <i>Nurse</i> ,	360 00
M. M. Goodspeed, <i>Matron</i> ,	300 00
Anna Sawyer, <i>Assistant</i> ,	260 00
Betsey Redman, <i>Assistant</i> ,	208 00
Lucy Loomis, <i>Assistant</i> ,	208 00
Margaret Joudell, <i>Assistant</i> ,	208 00
Betsey Todd, <i>Assistant</i> ,	160 00

Inventory.

Horses,	\$550 00
Cattle,	985 00
Swine,	680 00
Fowls,	19 20
Carriages and agricultural implements,	1,868 83
Machinery and mechanical fixtures,	1,480 70
Beds and bedding in the inmates' department,	2,198 40
Other furniture,	3,817 37
Personal property of the State in Sup'ts department,	1,769 52
Ready made clothing,	1,286 20
Dry goods,	157 05
Provisions and groceries,	553 64
Drugs and medicines,	425 00
Fuel,	2,526 13
Library,	353 48
Produce of farm on hand,	378 33

P H Y S I C I A N ' S R E P O R T .

To the Inspectors of the State Almshouse at Bridgewater :

GENTLEMEN,—The report of the Medical Department of this institution for the year ending September 30, 1859, is herewith transmitted.

Number of males admitted into the hospital,	.	.	687
females,	.	.	537
			1,224
Total,	.	.	1,224

Discharged,	.	.	1,087
Remaining, September 30,	.	.	103

Number of births :

Males,	.	.	24
Females,	.	.	28
Still-born, (sex not recorded,)	.	.	10
			62
Total,	.	.	62

The number of deaths during the past year is as follows :

Males,	.	.	100
Females,	.	.	78
			178
Total,	.	.	178

The following table shows the approximate ages of those having died.

Seventy years and upwards,	.	.	12
Between fifty and seventy years,	.	.	17

Between forty and fifty years, . . .	14
thirty and forty years, . . .	29
twenty and thirty years, . . .	24
ten and twenty years, . . .	13
one and ten years, . . .	22
Under one year, . . .	47
Total, . . .	<hr/> 178

The diseases proving fatal, and the number of deaths from each, are exhibited in the following table :

Abscess lumbar, . . .	1	Enteritis, . . .	3
Anemia, . . .	1	Epilepsy, . . .	3
Apoplexy, . . .	3	Fever, Typhoid, . . .	2
Brain, concussion of, . . .	1	Gangrene, . . .	3
Bronchitis, . . .	1	Gastritis, . . .	1
Cancer, . . .	4	Heart, disease of, . . .	1
Consumption, . . .	57	Inanition, . . .	4
Convulsions, puerperal, . . .	1	Marasmus, . . .	32
Convulsions, infantile, . . .	1	Paralysis, . . .	2
Debility, general, . . .	5	Peritonitis, puerperal, . . .	1
“ infantile, . . .	1	Pertussis, . . .	4
“ senile, . . .	9	Pneumonia, . . .	10
Diarrhœa, chronic, . . .	9	Asphyxia, . . .	1
Dropsy, . . .	4	Serofula, . . .	4
Dysentery, . . .	2	Encephalon, inflammatory disease of, . . .	7

Deaths each Month.

October, . . .	10	April, . . .	21
November, . . .	12	May, . . .	20
December, . . .	14	June, . . .	13
January, . . .	11	July, . . .	19
February, . . .	9	August, . . .	15
March, . . .	19	September, . . .	15

The class of patients admitted here is too well known to you to need comment. Judging by previous reports there is in this respect but little change from year to year.

The condition of those arriving from distant towns is in many instances deplorable, especially in cases where persons are attacked by acute disease. They have delayed to take the necessary measures to secure their early arrival in the hope

that their sickness would be but trivial, and are brought here only when the hope of an immediate recovery is entirely abandoned. Thus far, they have been destitute of medical aid, and disease unchecked, progressing with rapid stride in their weak and broken constitutions, has too frequently inflicted irreparable or fatal injury. Among any class of patients the danger of a fatal termination would be much increased and become doubly so among the indigent and those whose constitutions have been ruined by misfortune and suffering too often brought upon themselves by their own folly, crime and self-abuse.

There is no choice of patients in the medical department of an almshouse. Many wandering from place to place, obtaining a precarious living by begging or pilfering; the drunkard, the infant orphan, the foundling, and many doomed to certain death by malignant and incurable disease, when the necessities of life can no longer be procured, come here at last to receive the willing hospitalities of the State. Under such circumstances the percentage of mortality must inevitably be greater than in established medical institutions where a choice, to some degree at least, is exercised in the admission of its inmates.

The sanitary condition of the house cannot be accurately judged of either by the number of sick in the hospital or the number of deaths during the year, from the fact that by far the greater portion of patients are not seized with disease while here, but come here with the intention of entering the hospital to receive, gratuitously, care and medical attendance.

But comparatively few cases of severe sickness have occurred among those who were in health at the time of their admission to the house. Among this class, not including children under one year, seven cases only have proved fatal during the past year. Measles and whooping cough have occasionally found their way among the children and prevailed to a limited extent, while a few cases of catarrhal and scrofulous ophthalmia are almost constantly to be found in the wards especially appropriated to them. These cases are almost entirely confined to the children, and with an occasional exception, yield readily to treatment.

The greatest number of deaths has occurred among the consumptive and children under one year of age, consisting for the

greater part of orphans and foundlings who are obliged under the circumstances to be reared by “spoon-feeding,” a very uncertain method among infants, who at this tender age have at best but a slight hold on life. There have been one hundred and four deaths among those two classes alone, making nearly three-fifths of the whole number during the entire year.

With the present number of sick, the rooms cannot be called crowded; are spacious and commodious, and are ventilated according to the most approved plan. Especial care has been taken in the selection of the rooms occupied by the younger portion of the children, which are situated on that side of the building fronting the south, and are light, airy and thoroughly ventilated, and every attention has been given to promote the health and comfort of the occupants.

To secure a prompt attendance to the more immediate wants of the sick, a sufficient number of competent and salaried nurses are employed, whose whole time and attention is required in administering to the sick, and neither night or day are they left to the uncertain care of inmates.

HENRY C. SHAW,

Physician.

STATE ALMSHOUSE, BRIDGEWATER, }
September 30, 1859. }

CHAPLAIN'S REPORT.

To the Inspectors of the State Almshouse at Bridgewater :

GENTLEMEN,—The following report of the department committed to my care is respectfully presented for your inspection.

During the past year religious services have been held in the chapel every Sabbath morning. The attendance at these services has been such as to warrant the assurance that they have not been uninteresting. The whole demeanor of this mixed multitude has been orderly and respectful, inspiring the hope that the impressions evidently produced during the hours of religious worship may not be evanescent. And while the poor have the gospel preached, the evidences are not wanting that a deep struggle exists in many hearts against the allurements of vice. It is sincerely to be hoped, on the part of the erring, that while conscience, though enfeebled, commands obedience to the dictates of reason—as unfolded in God's Word—and her injunctions, and warnings are heard, its retributive power may deter them from pursuing farther that course which they are convinced led to their misfortunes, and that while a voice is heard calling them to the path of virtue, piety, and peace, they may look up and live. While the young, as objects of tender solicitude, are urged to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, as the best guaranty of their future well being, the aged are affectionately exhorted to go work in the moral vineyard of Him, who came to seek, and to save, that which was lost.

The school of the institution is in a very prosperous condition, second in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to very few common schools.

I am happy to state that every facility, in the performance of my duties, has been rendered by the superintendent.

In conclusion, I beg you, gentlemen, to accept my assurance of high regard for the deep interest you have manifested in the physical, mental, and moral advancement of all, in the various departments of the institution committed to your inspection.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON,

Chaplain.

BRIDGEWATER, September 30, 1859.